

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3494

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BDIS, EINV, PE, OTRA
SUBJECT: LE TOURNEAU CASE: RESULTS OF OPPERMAN VISIT WITH
MORALES BERMUDEZ

REF: LIMA 0641

1. DR. KENN OPPERMAN CAME TO EMBASSY JAN. 27 TO REPORT ON RESULTS OF HIS VISIT EARLIER IN DAY WITH PERUVIAN PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ. OPPERMAN PREFACED HIS REPORT WITH FOLLOWING BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
2. PRIOR TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S ELECTION VICTORY, OPPERMAN HAD INVITED HIM (ORALLY, AND POSSIBLY IN WRITING) TO SPEAK AT MAY 6, 1977, GRADUATION CEREMONIES OF OPPERMAN'S TOCCOA FALLS COLLEGE. OPPERMAN CLAIMED TO HAVE RECEIVED WORD WHILE IN PERU THAT SECRET SERVICE OFFICERS HAD VISITED COLLEGE IN LAST WEEK AND HE INTERPRETS THIS AS INDICATION THAT PRESIDENT CARTER IS GIVING SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO OPPERMAN'S INVITATION.
3. OPPERMAN SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH MORALES BERMUDEZ AND EXTENDED INVITATION TO LATTER TO ATTEND CEREMONIES AND HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH

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PRESIDENT CARTER PRIVATELY AND INFORMALLY. ACCORDING TO OPPERMAN MORALES BERMUDEZ WAS RECEPTIVE TO IDEA BUT HAD SAID THAT HE WOULD ATTEND ONLY IF CARTER HAD NO OBJECTION. OPPERMAN TOLD MORALES BERMUDEZ THAT HE PLANNED TO BE BACK IN PERU IN MARCH AND WOULD KEEP HIM INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS MATTER (OPPERMAN CLAIMED THAT HE HAD INFORMED MORALES THAT HE WAS ACTING AS PRIVATE CITIZEN AND NOT IN ANY OFFICIAL CAPACITY).

4. REGARDING THE LE TOURNEAU CASE, OPPERMAN INFORMED ECON OFF THAT, ACTING ON ADVICE OF BANCO DE LA NACION PRESIDENT GENERAL JOSE LOAYZA (WHOM OPPERMAN SAYS HE HAS KNOWN FOR LAST 15 YEARS), HE HAD NOT RAISED MATTER WITH PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ. HE SAID HE FELT HE WOULD HAVE MORE PROBABILITY OF EVENTUAL SUCCESS IN ENDEAVOR IF HE BUILT UP GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH MORLES FIRST. OPPERMAN CHARACTERIZED MEETING AS OOOD, WITH PRESIDENT TWICE ASKING HIM TO STAY AS OPPERMAN GOT UP TO LEAVE. OPPERMAN SAID THAT AT END OF MEETING MORALES SAID TO HIM THAT HE HOPED TO BE OF HELP IN OPPERMAN'S ENDEAVORS. OPPERMAN SAYS THAT HE BELIEVES THAT LOAYZA HAS BRIEFED MORALES ON LE TOURNEAU CASE AND HE INTERPRETS PRESIDENT'S COMMENT AS HOPEFUL SIGN RE SOLUTION IN LE TOURNEAU CASE.

5. COMMENT: A) MORALES BERMUDEZ MAY INDEED BE INTRIGUED BY THE INVITATION WHICH COULD GIVE HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET PRESIDENT CARTER. IT IS MORE PROBABLE THAT MORALES' REPLY WAS STANDARD PERUVIAN WAY TO GIVE POLITE, BUT ESSENTIALLY NON-COMMITTAL, RESPOSNSE TO OPPERMAN'S INVITATION. NEVERTHELESS INVITATION MAY EVENTUALLY BE USEFUL VEHICLE IF BOTH GOVERNMENTS DECIDE THAT TWO PRESIDENTS SHOULD MEET WITHIN NEXT SIX MONTHS. B) OPPERMAN EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH RESULTS OF HIS MEETING WITH MORALES. HE IS LEAVING PERU JAN 28. WE EXPECT HE WILL BE CALLING ON DEPARTMENT IN NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS AS INDICATED REFTEL. DEAN

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